

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for providing call pickup in a communications system including a plurality of communication stations operably coupled thereto, the method comprising:
 - originating a call from a first communication station to a second communication station via a network server;
 - alerting the second communication station of the call;
 - storing context information pertaining to the call at a database;
 - receiving, at the network server, at least one call pickup indication from a third communication station;
 - responsive to the call pickup indication, obtaining, at the network server, the context information from the database; and
 - applying the context information to establish communication between the first communication station and the third communication station.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 - determining, at the network server, whether the third communication station is eligible to receive the call; and
 - responsive to whether the third communication party is eligible to receive the call, establishing communication between the first communication station and the third communication station.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:

prior to establishing communications between the first communication station and the third communication station, establishing an early media dialog between the third communication station and the network server.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the establishing an early media dialog includes:

 sending a session initiated protocol (SIP) provisional response message to the third communication station from the network server.

5. The method of claim 4 further comprising:

 issuing a SIP message comprising a replaces header from the network server to the third communication station to cause the third communication station to establish communication with the first communication station.

6. The method of claim 2 wherein the determining whether the third communication station is eligible to receive a call from the first communication station occurs prior to obtaining the context information.

7. The method of claim 2 wherein the determining includes:

 determining whether the third communication station is in a same group as the second communication station,

 determining whether an extension number in the group is involved in a call

establishment when the third communication station is in the same group as the second communication station, and

determining that the third communication station is eligible to receive a call from the first communication station when an extension number in the group is determined to be involved in a call establishment.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one call pickup indication includes an extension number, and

wherein the method further comprises:

determining, prior to obtaining the context information, whether the extension number is in a ringing status, and

wherein the obtaining the context information occurs when the extension number is determined to be in a ringing status.

9. A method, performed by a network server, for providing call pickup in a communications system, the method comprising:

transmitting a first message from the network server to a called party device, the first message initiating a call establishment between a calling party device and the called party device;

receiving a second message at the network server from a third party device during the call establishment, the second message including a call pickup indication;

canceling, via the network server, the call establishment between the calling

party device and the called party device in response to the second message;

establishing a dummy session between the network server and the third party device;

transmitting a third message from the network server to the third party device, the third message initiating a call establishment between the calling party device and the third party device;

receiving, at the network server, a fourth message from the third party device, the fourth message causing the network server to cancel the dummy session; and

establishing a call between the calling party device and the third party device in response to the fourth message.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the establishing a dummy session includes:

establishing an early media dialog between the network server and the third party device.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the establishing an early media dialog includes:

sending a session initiated protocol (SIP) provisional response message from the network server to the third party device.

12. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

issuing a session initiated protocol (SIP) message comprising a replaces header

from the network server to the third party device, the SIP message causing the third party device to send the fourth message to the network server.

13. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

storing, following transmitting the first message, context information relating to the call between the calling party device and the called party device; and

retrieving the context information in response to receiving the second message, wherein the establishing a call between the calling party device and the third party device includes:

using the retrieved context information for establishing the call between the calling party device and the third party device.

14. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

determining, prior to the canceling, whether the third party device is eligible to receive a call from the calling party device.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the determining includes:

determining whether the third party device is in a same group as the called party device,

determining whether an extension number in the group is involved in a call establishment when the third party device is in the same group as the called party device, and

determining that the third party device is eligible to receive a call from the

calling party device when an extension number in the group is determined to be involved in a call establishment.

16. The method of claim 9 wherein the call pickup indication includes an extension number, and

wherein the method further comprises:

determining, prior to canceling the call establishment between the calling party device and the called party device, whether the extension number is in a ringing status, and

wherein the canceling the call establishment between the calling party device and the called party device occurs when the extension number is determined to be in a ringing status.

17. The method of claim 9 wherein the second message is transmitted to the network server in response to a designation of one or more keys at the third party device.

18. The method of claim 9 further comprising:

billing the third party in response to receiving the second message at the network server.

19. The method of claim 9 wherein the calling party device does not provide call pickup functionality.

20. The method of claim 9 wherein the canceling includes:
transmitting a session initiated protocol (SIP) CANCEL message to the called party device.
21. A server comprising:
means for transmitting a first message to a first device, the first message initiating a call establishment between a second device and the first device;
means for receiving a second message from a third device during the call establishment, the second message including a call pickup indication;
means for canceling the call establishment between the second device and the first device in response to the second message;
means for establishing a dummy session with the third device;
means for transmitting a third message to the third device, the third message initiating a call establishment between the second device and the third device;
means for receiving a fourth message from the third device, the fourth message causing the server to cancel the dummy session; and
means for establishing a call between the second device and the third device in response to the fourth message.
22. The server of claim 21 wherein the means for establishing a dummy session includes:
means for establishing an early media dialog between the server and the third

device.

23. The server of claim 22 wherein the means for establishing an early media dialog includes:

means for sending a session initiated protocol (SIP) provisional response message to the third device.

24. The server of claim 21 further comprising:

means for issuing a session initiated protocol (SIP) message comprising a replaces header to the third device, the SIP message causing the third device to send the fourth message to the server.

25. The server of claim 21 further comprising:

means for storing context information relating to the call between the second device and the first device; and

means for retrieving the context information in response to receiving the second message,

wherein the means for establishing a call between the second device and the third device includes:

means for using the retrieved context information for establishing the call between the second device and the third device.

26. The server of claim 21 further comprising:

means for determining, prior to canceling the call establishment between the second device and the first device, whether the third device is eligible to receive a call from the second device.

27. The server of claim 26 wherein the means for determining whether the third device is eligible to receive a call from the second device includes:

means for determining whether the third device is in a same group as the first device,

means for determining whether an extension number in the group is involved in a call establishment when the third device is in the same group as the first device, and

means for determining that the third device is eligible to receive a call from the second device when an extension number in the group is determined to be involved in a call establishment.

28. The server of claim 21 wherein the call pickup indication includes an extension number, and

wherein the server further comprises:

means for determining, prior to canceling the call establishment between the calling party device and the called party device, whether the extension number is in a ringing status, and

wherein the means for canceling the call establishment between the calling

party device and the called party device cancels the call establishment when the extension number is determined to be in a ringing status.

29. A method for providing call pickup, comprising:

initiating a call from a first device to a second device, the call being initiated over one or more networks, at least one of the one or more networks being a data network;

storing information relating to the call initiation between the first device and the second device;

receiving a message from a third device during the call initiation, the message including a call pickup indication;

retrieving the information relating to the call initiation between the first device and the second device; and

establishing a call between the first device and the third device based on the retrieved information.

30. The method of claim 29 further comprising:

establishing an early media dialog between a network server and the third device prior to establishing a call between the first device and the third device.

31. The method of claim 30 where the establishing an early media dialog includes:

sending a session initiated protocol (SIP) provisional response message from the network server to the third device.

32. The method of claim 29 further comprising:
determining, prior to establishing a call between the first device and the third device, whether the third device is eligible to receive a call from the first device.
33. The method of claim 29 wherein the first device does not provide call pickup functionality.
34. A method for providing call pickup in a communications system, the method comprising:
initiating a call from a first device to a second device, the call being initiated over one or more networks, at least one of the one or more networks being a data network;
receiving a message from a third device during the call initiation, the message including a call pickup indication;
canceling the call initiation between the first device and the second device; and
establishing a call between the first device and the third device, the first device being unable to initiate call pickup.
35. The method of claim 34 wherein the first device includes a plain old telephone service (POTS) device and the third device includes a session initiation protocol (SIP) device.
36. The method of claim 34 wherein the first device and the third device include a

session initiation protocol (SIP) device.